

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAMA KO 01027 121713 Z

45

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-12 ADP-00 EB-11 COME-00 AGR-20

CIEP-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 SPM-01 SR-02 ORM-03 RSR-01 /185 W
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P R 121600 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY BAMA KO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6042

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS BAMA KO 1027

E. O. 11652 N/ A

TAGS: EAID, ML

SUBJECT: DROUGHT SITUATION IN MALI: SOUTHERN AND MIDDLE MALI

REF: BAMA KO 1010

1. ALL " NON- DROUGHT" AREAS OF MALI WERE VISITED BY REPORTING OFFICERS PLUS DCM KATZEN IN PAST TWO WEEKS. FOR PURPOSES PRESENT CONSIDERATION, WE DEFINE " NON- DROUGHT" AREAS AS THOSE WHICH HAD LOSS OF 50 PERCENT OR LESS IN THEIR MILLET CROP. IN THOSE AREAS FARMERS HAVE ENOUGH MILLET FOR THIS YEAR' S CONSUMPTION, FOR RECONSTITUTING AT LEAST MINIMUM " SECURITY STOCKS", AND USUALLY HAVE SOME SURPLUS FOR SALE TO NOMADIC MAURITANIANS. LATTER MUST SOMEHOW BUY ENOUGH GRAIN TO HOLD THEM UNTIL HARVEST. MAURITANIANS NOW PAYING VERY HIGH PRICES (UP TO 20 TIMES OFFICIAL PRICES) TO FARMERS IN SOUTH. AS AGAINST THIS COMPETITION, WHICH LITERALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTROL, OPAM HAS BEEN UNABLE TO BUY
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MORE THAN 6,000 TONS. THIS YEAR, GOM DECIDED NOT TO PRESSURE BELEAGUED FARMERS THROUGH OPAM PURCHASING CAMPAIGN EXCEPT IN RICH SIKASSO AREA, WHICH ONLY LOST 10 PERCENT ITS GRAIN CROP.

2. BIGGEST PROBLEM IN NON- DROUGHT AREA IS FEEDING OF URBAN CENTERS: BAMAKO, WITH ITS " METROPOLITAN" AREA APPROACHING HALF MILLION PEOPLE, AND TOWNS LIKE SEGOU, SIKASSO, KOUTIALA, FANA AND OTHERS. NEEDS HERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 90,000 TONS TO CARRY THROUGH UNTIL NEW CROP COMES IN (OR DOESN' T COME IN) IN DECEMBER. VERY DIFFICULT TO KNOW WHAT STOCKS OPAM NOW HAS IN BAMAKO AND RNO URBAN AREAS. OPAM SAYS IT HAS VIRTUALLY NOTHING AVAILABLE. IT HAS INTRODUCED STRICT RATIONING AND THERE LONG LINES AT OPAM WAREHOUSES AND AT " COOPERATIVES". AS ALWAYS IN CITIES, PEOPLE ARE NERVOUS AND MCNL DOESN' T DISCOUNT POSSIBILITIES OF RIOTS AND ATTEMPTS TO RAID WAREHOUSES IF STOCKS DON' T COME IN. HENCE IT WILL PROBABLY GIVE CERTAIN PRIORITY TO FEEDING BAMAKO.

3. CATTLE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AND MIDDLE MALI IS GENERALLY SATISFACTORY. THIS IS NOT MAJOR CATTLE AREA BECAUSE IT MARGINALLY TSETSE INFESTED. ALSO, ONLY MOST SOUTHERN AREAS AROUND SIKASSO HAVE BOTH WATER AND GRASS, AND NORTHERN HERDS NOW MOVING AROUND THIS AREA OR IN NORTHERN IVORY COAST. IN MIDDLE MALI, NIGER AND SENEGAL RIVER TRIBUTARIES ARE DRY AND MANY WELLS VERY LOW OR EXHAUSTED. NIGER RIVER AT BAMAKO IS LOWER THAN ANY REMEMBERED TIME, AND IT NOW POSSIBLE TO WADE ACROSS RIVER AT MANY PLACES. MANY VILLAGES ALONG DRY WATERCOURSES HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY ABANDONED UNTIL PLANTING SEASON AND PEOPLE HAVE MIGRATED TO RIVER OR FURTHER SOUTH, TAKING WHAT GRAIN THEY HAVE WITH THEM. FARMERS DON' T LIKE TO DO THIS BUT ACCEPT IT AS PART OF LIFE' S EXPECTED PROBLEMS. THEY WILL BE HUNGRY, INCONVENIENCED, AND SUFFER HIGHER THAN USUAL DEATHS AMONG BABIES, THE SICK AND THE OLD. BUT MOST WILL " GET BY", WHEREAS MANY PEOPLE IN DROUGHT AREAS FARTHER TO NORTH COULD STARVE UNLESS THEY GET FOOD VERY SOON OR GET OUT.

BLAKE

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